

Frequently Asked Questions:
Idaho's Return to Stage 3
October 27, 2020 Stay Healthy Order

1. Does the move back to Idaho Rebounds Stage Three plan mean all state employees need to return home and telecommute?

No. State of Idaho employees began re-entering the workplace during phase two (May 16, 2020) of the Idaho Rebounds plan. Agencies should continue to have onsite presence of employees, as long as physical distancing and sanitation requirements can be achieved. Requests to telecommute should be considered in accordance with agency telecommuting policies and practices, in addition to considerations for employees who request an accommodation under the ADA.

2. Why are we keeping employees at the office if we are going back a stage?

Government is considered an essential service and expected to remain open to provide services to Idaho citizens. The state has not had any major outbreaks within any of our state agencies because we have been diligent about following the protocols outlined by the Governor and Public Health.

Additionally, the move back to Stage 3 was largely due to local health districts tracing infections to gatherings of people outside of the workplace and classroom. The measures employers and employees have been taking are proving to be helpful in mitigating spread of the virus. This public order is an emphasis to continue our safe workplace practices while revisiting and revising them to be even more conservative.

3. Can an employee request to telecommute due to the public health order?

DHR's temporary telecommuting agreement and permanent telecommuting agreements outline the circumstances for when telecommuting is an appropriate option. It is important that agencies work with each individual employee and consult DHR with any questions.

4. The Governor's Stay Healthy Order, effective October 27, 2020, states employers shall provide adequate sanitation and personal hygiene for employees, vendors, and patrons. Where can state agencies obtain these resources?

The Idaho Department of Administration is assisting agencies with acquiring non-medical/emergency mask, gloves, and sanitizer (MGS) through their website supplies.idaho.gov.

5. Does an employee have to isolate following travel outside of Idaho?

The guidelines for both essential and non-essential travel does not change between stages three and four. The current CDC guidance for isolation after travel can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/after-travel-precautions.html>.

6. Is there anything really changing for state agency workplaces with the move back to stage three?

Yes. The issued public health order states that all individuals, businesses, and governmental agencies must adhere to the mandatory portions of the physical distancing and sanitation requirements. In stage four these practices were encouraged, but not mandated. Therefore, state agencies must update their Return to Work Plans in accordance with this order and distribute to their workforce immediately.

7. What should agencies do if employees work in positions that do not allow them to physical distance? For example, if employees are required to ride in a vehicle together to perform their duties?

The October 27, 2020 Stay Healthy Order requires physical distancing *whenever possible*. Agencies should review their Return to Work Plans and any positions where physical distancing may not be possible and make any necessary modifications to comply. In situations where it is not possible for employees to physical distance and maintain agency operations, agencies need to include in their Return to Work Plans a requirement for employees to wear a face covering.

8. What is the difference between Ada County's modified Stage 3 and the State's Stage 3?

Ada County's Order is available [here](#). In summary, Ada County's Order prohibits social gatherings of more than 10 people and prohibits gatherings of 50 or more (see [order](#) for definitions); whereas the Governor's Stay Healthy Order prohibits gatherings of more than 50 people, with certain exceptions. Additionally, Ada County's Order includes a mask mandate and the Governor's Order does not. Agencies must follow whichever has the stricter requirements and are expected to communicate expectations to their workforce.